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By Shea Johnson

May 25. 2016 11:15AM

ACLU discrimination class-action suit against county jail wades forward

Parties in a class-action lawsuit alleging discrimination against gay, bisexual and transgender (GBT) inmates at West Valley Detention Center appear open to resolving the case independently or through formal mediation, yet first must wrap up a weighty discovery effort.

The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Southern California, along with a Los Angeles-based law firm, filed the federal complaint in October 2014 against San Bernardino County Sheriff John McMahon, other jail officials and the county.

At its core, it contended that policies at the Rancho Cucamonga facility were systematically discriminatory against GBT inmates, purportedly denying them access to programs afforded to inmates in general population. The alleged restrictions extend to work, drug treatment and educational and religious services. The suit also suggests deputies have retaliated against inmates in the two-tier, 16-cell alternative lifestyle tank for complaining.

The defendants have pushed back against the claims, saying the sheriff's department has "done an exemplary job of ensuring that GBT ... inmates are housed in a safe environment while also ensuring that these inmates receive the full complement of activities and services to which they are legally entitled," according to a March 28 joint filing.

The filing, the last legal brief submitted in the case as of Wednesday, also describes "enormous requests" for discovery submitted to the sheriff's department on an ongoing basis since last year, including copies of department policies and practices and electronically stored information.

The extensive discovery process will ultimately preclude depositions.

The March 28 filing also indicated that jail site inspections were planned for Wednesday and Thursday, while a second meeting in an effort to resolve or at least narrow some of the issues at hand was scheduled for June.

Meanwhile, depositions were tentatively slated for July and August.

"The parties are open to attempting to resolve the case through their own efforts or through formal mediation yet to be scheduled," the filing stated.

But if those efforts prove unfruitful, the sides will likely either request a magistrate judge or private mediator to assist with settlement negotiations. A settlement conference deadline has been set for Aug. 14, 2017, six weeks before a tentative trial date.

The plaintiffs suggest that a trial would run 10 to 15 days, while the defendants estimate it will last about eight.

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http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160525/NEWS/160529827

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DOMBROWSKI & SHAY: Regulations hurting brick-and-mortar stores

By BILL DOMBROWSKI and MATTHEW SHAY
2016-05-25 15:27:17

A perfect storm is unfolding between Main Street retailers and California lawmakers, and the consequences have made headlines as large retailers close their doors and reduce locations across California.

Every week there is a news story about a different retailer, whether a sporting goods shop or a department store, that's struggling to keep pace as consumers shift to online shopping. At the same time, California policymakers continue to impose a barrage of regulations on stores that have a physical presence in California – essentially picking winners and losers in our state's economy – and storefronts are losing out.

For years, retailers have noted the difficulty of running a store in California, yet their pleas have fallen on deaf ears – as our state leaders and regulators assume stores will simply absorb the cost of each new regulation. As a result, brick-and-mortar stores are facing minimum wage increases, a split roll on property taxes, a new fee on tires and paid family sick leave for school activities, a pharmacy take-back program, a prohibition on wine promotions that will allow online retailers to offer a discount, a soda tax and restrictive scheduling – to name a few challenges.

Yet, policymakers have failed to consider the fact that retailers operate on razor-thin margins, and every new regulation has an operational cost that, over time, reaches a point where it's no longer profitable to maintain a store presence. Meanwhile, online out-of-state retailers come over the top and sidestep every California regulation – offering similar services and products.

The irony is that the very same elected officials pushing for over-regulation represent communities that lose out when a business makes the decision to close its doors. Brick-and-mortar locations not only bring jobs to communities, but also tax revenue to fund city services like personnel, road construction, police and fire service. And the ripple effect can be felt across multiple industries such as store construction and advertising dollars.

The fact is that both online retailers and brick-and-mortar locations have a place in our economy – bringing unique and important services to customers. While online retailers offer convenience, brick-and-mortar stores provide customer experience and create local jobs and tax revenue – and there is a way for both models to thrive in California's economy.

The first step, however, is for our elected leaders to acknowledge that they're regulating Main Street businesses out of business. The next step is to have a candid and thoughtful conversation – where all parties are at the table – on ways to balance the fair treatment of employees to improve the employee-employer relationship, while allowing brick-and-mortar stores a level playing field.

This is a new economy, and just as business owners are forced to adapt, elected officials must adapt, too. If not, an increase of empty storefronts and "closed for business" signs will continue to make headlines.

Bill Dombrowski is president and CEO of the California Retailers Association. Matthew Shay is president and CEO of the National Retail Federation.

How Cities Are Paying for Local Infrastructure

POSTED BY : CITIES SPEAK MAY 25, 2016 IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cities can no longer look to their states or the federal government for funding – they need the authority to find creative local solutions.

By Christiana McFarland and Nicole DuPuis.

As the infrastructure deficit grows in our cities, so do questions about how to pay for these critical systems. Funding from the federal and state levels is uncertain at best, placing increasing pressure on local governments to take the lead. But political realities coupled with unequal access to local revenue tools means some don't have the authority they need to answer the call.

In April, for example, voters in Pulaski County, Arkansas, rejected a quarter-percentage-point sales tax increase that would have been the area's first tax dedicated to transit, projected to raise $18 million annually for bus-service expansion and the creation of bus lanes. The proposed tax drew widespread support within the city of Little Rock, but not in other parts of the county.

Local governments in Arkansas are among those in 29 states that are permitted to levy a local-option sales tax. But even where that authority is granted, additional limitations on these powers stand in the way. Voter approval is just one implementation hurdle states impose on their cities. Others include rate caps and matching requirements that restrict the ability of cities to meet growing infrastructure demands.

The infrastructure funding relationship that cities have with their states is a complex one. Declining state gas-tax revenues have made state programs and funding to cities increasingly unreliable. Some states are even diverting dedicated gas-tax revenue to balance their state budgets or raiding local revenues to help fill their own maintenance funding gaps. In the rare instances where states have budget surpluses, as in Minnesota, lawmakers are favoring one-time spending increases on transportation over permanent tax increases.

State spending priorities, both for state capital program and infrastructure grants to cities, are often not aligned with city needs or priorities. For example, in New Hampshire, the state implemented a moratorium on aid grants for water and sewer projects even though cities had already completed some of the projects with the intention of using state grants to help retire bond payments.

In short, local governments' access to revenue-raising tools is highly uneven across the country. Our new report, "Paying for Local Infrastructure in a New Era of Federalism,"examines the wide variance: While 29 states authorize local-option sales taxes, for example, only 16 allow local-option fuel taxes. Twenty six states allow local-option motor-vehicle registration fees. Thirty-two states authorize public-private partnerships, and 27 have state infrastructure banks.

The way these tools work in each jurisdiction is very much dependent upon the political nuances, demographic makeup and the types of challenges specific to each city. The political landscape in many states is also antagonistic toward cities, particularly for new local taxes and transit projects that are perceived only to serve certain constituencies.

When paying for infrastructure becomes entwined with these sentiments, it is even more evident that cities and their local partners must find other ways. Cities with access to a state infrastructure bank, like those in California, are finding success, but often these banks are restricted to particular uses and particular cities within a state — if they are funded at all.

As a result of the limited options available to cities, some are exploring riskier ways to fund infrastructure, including direct loans and pension obligation bonds. Some are turning tosmart-city technologies to increase efficiencies and decrease costs, and others are looking to unlock the value from underutilized assets like parking, lighting and obsolete payphones.

The reason cities are experimenting with a patchwork of new and traditional tools and approaches is because they have to. More funding from federal and state partners would certainly be welcomed. Even more pressing is the need for greater communication and alignment of priorities between levels of government, along with the local authority to implement creative solutions to closing the infrastructure deficit.

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For many poor families, housing costs are ‘out of reach’

By Joe Davidson | Columnist May 26 at 7:00 AM

Even as the federal government provides housing assistance for 5.5 million households, 7.2 million housing units are needed for more than 10 million extremely low-income families.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Julián Castro delivered this bad news in a report on housing for low-income renters that is “Out of Reach,” which is the name of the study.

“Our nation can’t fulfill any of our major goals — whether it’s tackling inequality, improving health care, keeping neighborhoods safe, or making sure every child gets a good education — unless we also focus on housing,” Castro wrote in this year’s annual report published by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC).

The affordable housing situation is bleak. So bleak that “in no state, metropolitan area, or county can a full-time worker earning the prevailing minimum wage afford a modest two-bedroom apartment,” according to the report.

To afford a two-bedroom apartment at the current federal minimum wage of $7.25 an hour, a worker would need to work 112 hours a week, every week, according to the report. That means workers “would have no remaining time during the week for anything other than working and sleeping.”

The report looks at the annual income needed in each state and the District to afford a two bedroom apartment at the fair market rent, which is used by HUD to reflect the cost of utilities and housing.

In the District, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom is $1,623. “In order to afford this level of rent and utilities — without paying more than 30% of income on housing — a household must earn $5,410 monthly or $64,920 annually,” according to the report.

To afford that, a worker would have to earn more than $31 an hour – about three times the District’s current minimum wage of $10.50 an hour. That increases to $11.50 on July 1. Wage stagnation and the declining real value of the federal minimum wage contribute to the affordable housing crisis.

The coalition has recommendations to improve the situation, including one that would requiring cutting what has long been a sacred cow.

NLIHC proposes a formula reducing the mortgage interest tax deduction that benefits homeowners. For years, there have been various proposals to change the popular deduction. Whatever reform that might eventually be approved, the coalition wants a portion of the savings to go to affordable housing.

“The federal government has the resources to end the shortage of housing affordable to the lowest income families,” said Diane Yentel, president and CEO of NLIHC. “It is simply a matter of how those resources are allocated. Instead of subsidizing the mortgages of higher income people, we must invest in making rental housing more affordable and available to those most in need of assistance.”

One current program shows what the government can do. The report highlights the Housing Trust Fund as “the first new federal housing program in a generation” to focus on “extremely low income” people.

More than $173 million will be available this summer for affordable housing programs. At least 90 percent of that must go to build, preserve or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for the poor, the report said. The remainder can be used to support homeownership for them.

During a call with reporters, Castro said affordable housing “is everyone’s issue” because “tackling the affordability crisis isn’t just the right thing to do, it’s also one of [the] best ways we can invest in our nation’s long-term growth.”

He emphasized that it’s not just the very poor who would benefit from increasing affordable housing.

“Last year, rising rents in a number of cities outpaced the rate of inflation, which is hurting low- and moderate income Americans,” the secretary wrote in the preface to the report.

“The crisis is also affecting seniors, many of whom live on fixed incomes,” he added. “Today, HUD is only able to serve one out of every three seniors who needs our help. And Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies calculated that as our nation ages, HUD would need to provide housing support for an additional 900,000 seniors just to keep pace between now and 2030."

That's not going to happen without government involvement. The private sector largely isn't interested in developing housing for the poor.

"Absent public subsidy," the report said, "the private market does little to produce new rental housing affordable to the lowest income households."

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[The number of homeless families in the District has soared]

Columnist Joe Davidson covers the federal government in the Federal Insider. It replaced the Federal Diary, which focused on federal employees. Davidson previously was an assistant city editor at The Washington Post and a Washington and foreign correspondent with The Wall Street Journal, where he covered federal agencies and political campaigns. Follow @JoeDavidsonWP

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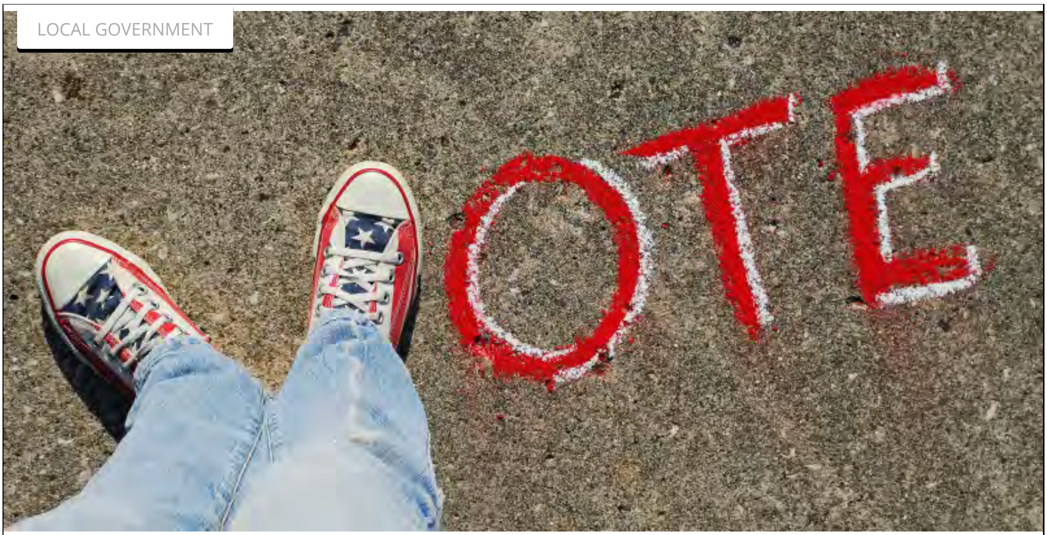

Expanding the California Electorate

POSTED BY : PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA MAY 24, 2016

Originally posted at the Public Policy Institute of CA.
By Linda Strean.

Unlike many states, California has been taking steps to encourage voter participation, making it easier to register to vote and to cast ballots. Nevertheless, only half of California adults can be expected to vote in this year's presidential election, and they are likely to be very different from those who do not vote—in their demographic and economic backgrounds and in their political attitudes, according to a PPIC report, California's Exclusive Electorate: Who Votes and Why it Matters. What more can the state do to expand?

A group of leaders and experts gathered to discuss the question at a PPIC event in Los Angeles last week. Some emphasized that there is still much to do to make the mechanics of voting easier.

California's secretary of state, Alex Padilla, said the new "motor voter" law—which will register eligible adults to vote when they go to the Department of Motor Vehicles unless they opt out—may have a simple but profound effect when it goes into effect. This more automated registration process will trigger a series of communications—the voter information guide and sample ballot—that will go to large number of Californians new to elections and serve as invitations to get involved.

Expanding California's Electorate

But Padilla and other speakers also said the social component is important when engaging Californians in elections and the reason he regularly visits high schools, community colleges, and youth groups. “There’s still no substitute for a personal invitation to get involved,” he said.

Padilla’s conversation with Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO, was followed by a discussion in which panelists picked up the theme of outreach to Californians who are underrepresented in the electorate.

Karla Zombro, field director for California Calls, noted that candidate campaigns focus on likely voters, perpetuating a cycle in which the same unrepresentative group of voters cast ballots year after year. Her group works to bring people into the process by consistently communicating with the Californians the campaigns don’t reach.

“What’s most important is what we do the day after they vote. Or if they don’t vote, that we still go back to them,” she said.

“We talk to people two or three times a year,” she said. “It’s neighbors talking to each other. The message matters, but the messenger matters just as much.”

Other panelists included Dean Logan, Los Angeles County registrar-recorder; Karthick Ramakrishnan, associate dean of the UC Riverside School of Public Policy; and Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, California assemblymember. The moderator was Efrain Escobedo, vice president for civic engagement and public policy at the California Community Foundation.

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Cora Bird
Since California issues drivers licenses to illegals, does that mean they are being registered to vote? How is citizenship verified with the motor voter process?
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ORANGE COUNTY
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O.C. cities' pension struggles

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER EDITORIAL
2016-05-24 17:25:05

It seems that almost no state or local government is immune to struggles with public pension costs. These rising obligations can be a nasty surprise for governments that have relied on rosy actuarial assumptions to determine their pension costs, which, unfortunately, is the vast majority of them.

The Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research has tried to correct for this by using a “market rate” to discount future liabilities “to more closely represent market realities and system liabilities.” For California, researchers used 3.723 percent, based on the California Public Employees’ Retirement System’s rate at which local governments would have to value the liabilities they would need to pay off in order to leave the CalPERS system. That is far below the pension fund’s 7.5 percent assumed annual investment return rate.

According to SIEPR’s PensionTracker.org website, the highest unfunded pension liabilities per household in Orange County are those of Santa Ana ($20,684 per household), Brea ($20,113), Newport Beach ($19,062), Anaheim ($18,808) and Costa Mesa ($15,976). These pension debts are roughly three times the official statistics.

Ideally, we favor a shift to 401(k)-style defined-contribution retirement plans, which offer employees greater flexibility, portability and control over their retirement investments while eliminating taxpayer exposure. But since this would require cities to terminate their CalPERS contracts, which would generally be cost prohibitive, local governments should benchmark salary and benefits levels to the private sector as much as possible and/or increase employee contributions for new hires to keep costs fair and affordable.

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

L.A. County extends medical marijuana growing ban one month

Los Angeles County is halting cultivation of medical marijuana, like the plants pictured, in unincorporated areas. (Jim Mone/Associated Press)

By Abby Sewell · Contact Reporter

MAY 24, 2016, 1:50 PM

Los Angeles County supervisors voted Tuesday to extend a temporary ban on growing medical marijuana in unincorporated areas by one month, but shelved a proposed 10-month ban.

In asking to postpone a vote on the longer ban, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl noted that there is a strong possibility that Californians will vote in November to legalize recreational marijuana use.

"If they do pass, we must regulate and not ban," she said.

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The supervisors voted in February to draft a temporary ban on medical marijuana cultivation and study a permanent ban, citing concerns about environmental effects and safety issues. They passed a 45-day ban last month, which was set to expire this week if the board had not acted.

County planning officials asked for a 10-month extension so they could conduct a "comprehensive zoning study" and propose a system for regulating growing operations.

Marijuana dispensaries are already banned in unincorporated areas.

Medical marijuana patients and advocates pushed back against the ban.

"We have people who have seizures, we have people who have glaucoma, we have those with degenerative bone diseases, chronic pain, and unfortunately they are denied their medications now because of the closure of our cannabis clinics, our dispensaries," said Greg Hernandez of Lake Los Angeles. "The only thing that this ban has gone ahead and done is reignited the black market right here in the Antelope Valley."

Josh Drayton, a former aide to state Senate leader Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles), who now serves as deputy director of the California Cannabis Industry Assn., said polling has shown widespread support for the statewide marijuana legalization measure and asked the board to bring in industry representatives to help develop a regulatory structure.

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"Cannabis is not going away," he said. "I would encourage the board to get ahead of this instead of behind."

The supervisors have also battled with the wine industry over stringent restrictions on vineyards in the Santa Monica Mountains. Kuehl said county planners need to also look at the environmental effects of marijuana cultivation.

"I don't want to regulate grapes more than I regulate other crops, including marijuana," she said.

The supervisors will revisit the ban on June 28.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Unions Seek Pension ‘Death Benefit’ Hike

POSTED BY : ED MENDEL MAY 23, 2016

Annual rates paid by employers to CalPERS and CalSTRS are going up, pension funding levels haven’t recovered from a big drop during the recession, and Gov. Brown’s pension reform put a lid on pension increases.

But there is still pressure for one type of retirement benefit increase: a lump-sum payment from pension funds received by survivors for funeral expenses when members die, often in addition to monthly payments for the spouse and dependents.

It’s usually called, ironically enough, the “death benefit.”

Last week, the CalPERS board took a neutral unless amended position on what has become perennial legislation to increase the death benefit from $2,000 to a minimum of $5,000 for its largest group of members, non-teaching school employees.

Last month, the CalSTRS board, after an initial look in September, once again put on hold a long-delayed increase in a $6,163 retiree death benefit for teachers. Since the board last increased the payment in 2002, inflation has increased 38 percent.

Part of the argument for the CalPERS non-teaching increase, in addition to the rising cost of funerals, is equity with other public pension members, which critics say has been used in the past to "ratchet up" retirement benefits.

Ivan Carillo of the California Federation of Teachers, the sponsor of the legislation (AB 1878), told the CalPERS board last week that since the death benefit was increased to $2,000 in 2000, the cost of the average funeral is up 40 percent to $10,000.

He said there have been too many "heartbreaking stories" of the lowest-paid school staff, the non-teaching "classified" employees, seeking money for funerals from friends, churches, and high-interest loans, some even losing their houses to cover costs.

The importance to the non-teaching school employees of an increase in the death benefit is the reason the legislation has been repeatedly introduced, he said, a half dozen times since 2009.

"They see it as an equity issue," said Carillo. "As was also noted, CalSTRS members receive a death benefit of $6,163. So, their colleagues on their own school sites lives appear to be valued more than classified members."

Equity was the reason given by CalPERS for sponsoring a major retroactive pension increase, SB 400 in 1999, best known for a Highway Patrol formula that became the local police-firefighter standard that some critics say is "unsustainable."

But the legislation also gave other state and non-teaching school employees a major pension increase. In 1991 new state workers were given a pension well below the pensions of previous hires and most local government employees.

In a 17-page brochure about SB 400 titled "Addressing Benefit Equity," CalPERS said the low pensions for new state workers made it difficult to attract talented employees in a tight job market, particularly for jobs requiring specialized skills.

"Employees are working side by side, and earning benefits at a smaller rate than colleagues performing the same jobs," the CalPERS brochure said of state workers hired before and after the 1991 pension cut for new hires.

Equity also was part of the staff recommendation adopted by the CalPERS board last week on the school bill: neutral if amended to include state workers, who currently have a similar $2,000 death benefit, and an appropriate funding source is identified.

The bill is supported by the California Teachers Association and other leading labor groups. Listed as opposition are the Los Angeles County Office of Education and Gov. Brown's Finance department.

"As a reminder, most benefits for current members are typically negotiated through collective bargaining contracts," Katie Hagen, representing Brown's Human Resources director, told her fellow CalPERS board members.

School employers currently are allowed to amend their CalPERS contracts to provide death benefits of $3,000, $4,000 or $5,000. When pension reformers propose legislation or initiatives, they are often told by union officials that benefit changes should be negotiated.

A statewide increase of the death benefit for school employees would create a $398 million liability, estimated a CalPERS analysis of AB 1878. The first annual payment would be $32.7 million and the final payment 20 years later $57.3 million.

In addition to a pension, school employees in the California Public Employees Retirement System receive federal Social Security, which provides a lump-sum death benefit of $255. Members of the California Teachers Retirement System do not receive Social Security.

Equity is the reason for a big difference between the current CalSTRS death benefit for retirees, $6,163, and the death benefit for active members, $24,652, both last increased in 2002 when the system was fully funded.

Rick Reed, CalSTRS chief actuary, told the board last month that when the pension plan was changed in the past to ensure equality between males and females, the large death benefit for active members was an "offset" to balance the outcome.

If the death benefit were increased to reflect a 38 percent increase in the cost of living since 2001, CalSTRS actuaries estimate, the retiree benefit would be $8,499, the active benefit $33,996, and the actuarial obligation increase would be $267 million.

The annual valuation issued last month showed that CalSTRS, as of June 30 last year, only had 68.5 percent of the projected assets needed to pay for pensions promised in the future.

That's higher than predicted at this point when legislation two years ago began phasing in a long-delayed rate hike. School payments to CalSTRS will more than double, going from 8.25 percent of pay to 19.1 percent of pay by 2020.

But a staff report last month warned that the CalSTRS investment fund expected to pay two-thirds of future pensions had "losses experienced so far this fiscal year" that could result in lower funding than originally projected.

Last September, a CalSTRS committee rejected a policy that would have resumed inflation increases in the death benefit, but only in years when investment earnings were high enough to keep the plan on the path to full funding, despite the added cost.

At a full CalSTRS board meeting last month, Harry Keiley, one of three members elected by educators on the 12-member board, said he agrees with staying on the full-funding track but wants consideration of a death benefit increase at an "appropriate" time.

"Perhaps we look at this item separately as a stand-alone item at some future date as the funding status improves," Keiley said. Several board members asked for information about death benefits in other pension systems, another look at equity.

The CalSTRS staff gave the board a survey last September of death benefits provided by 22 retirement systems throughout the nation, including one in Canada. CalSTRS is among the more generous.

Most of the retirement systems offer some form of continuing income to the survivors of retirees. Fewer provide income to the survivors of active workers. CalSTRS does both.

"In addition, only slightly more than half of the plans investigated provide a one-time lump-sum death benefit, other than the return of contributions and interest in the member's account, to survivors of members who die while in active service and less than half provide a similar benefit to members who die after retiring," said the staff report.

Originally posted at Cal Pensions.

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Print This Article

County OKs staffing plan for expanded jail

• West Ceres facility to be opened in phases with need

Jeff Benziger
jbenziger@cerescourier.com
May 25, 2016

The county is crafting the move into the new $89.5 million expansion of the Public Safety Center being constructed in west Ceres in phases based on need and on the availability of money.

The project is about 80 percent completed and plans are to open 120 beds in March of next year.

The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors gave its blessings at its Tuesday, May 18 meeting to a plan to staff the expanded jail with its 480 additional jail beds and 57-bed medical and mental health unit with 15 sheltered hospital beds at the Hackett Road facility. The plan includes staffing for an intake, release, transportation and jail administration building.

Once the new jail is fully operational, the old downtown Modesto jail will be abandoned. The project will also expand the county's number of jail cells.

"The culture of the jail population has changed dramatically over the past five years," Sheriff's Department Captain William "Bill" Duncan told supervisors. "Since the enactment of AB 109 in October 2011 we now have a longer term, high-security inmate with a much higher prevalence for mental illness and with limited access to health-care and rehabilitative programs. Despite a brief respite from the overpopulation and substantial early custody releases from Proposition 47, we are once again early releasing inmates due to jail overcrowding and an escalation of crime in our communities."

The county broke ground on the jail project in the summer of 2014 after becoming the first in the state to snag AB 900 Phase II funds, also known as the Local Jail Construction Financing Program established by the State Public Works Board. The $113 million project is being covered by $80 million funded through the state grant. The county hired Hensel Phelps to construct two maximum security units, a health care unit, and support facilities.

Strings attached to the funding do not require that the county fully staff the new jail but the county must open part the jail within 90 days of completion of construction.

"The earliest opportunity to fully staff and operate the new facilities would occur in 2018-19, based on budget and the Board of Supervisors' consideration of plans to move forward," noted a staff report from the county Chief Executive Officer's office to supervisors.

The staffing model being used by the county details that an additional 111 positions will be needed to staff the fully-utilized jail.

The county is planning a two-cycle recruitment, hiring, training and placement of 32 new full-time deputies and transferring 21 existing positions to be on staff when the first 120 beds open up in March 2017. The first year of operations will cost $5 million, covered by $3.3 million from the county's general fund and $1.92 million from the state.

By the second year, an additional 78 new positions will be the main expense associated with operating the new facility. The county expects second-year operations - when 240 more jail beds are made available - to cost $12.5 million. When the jail is fully operational by 2018-19, the county expects costs to reach $18 million. Funding will come from the county's general fund and the Community Corrections Partnership, an agency born out of prison realignment when the state took lower-level offenders out of state custody and made them the responsibility of the county.

Supervisors approved the use of $650,000 for supplies and equipment out of a $2 million left over in the budget for the jail expansion.

To minimize the number of new deputies needed, the county negotiated with the union representing custodial deputies to work 12-hour shifts, said project manager Patty Hill Thomas.

Because the recruitment cycle takes about 37 weeks and nine weeks of on-the-job training, the county is already moving on new hires. Six-week CORE training academy classes have been scheduled to begin in early July, October, and March 2017 and July 2017. Applicants will undergo physical agility testing, a written exam, oral exam and personal history statement review/interview is completed which takes approximately eight weeks. If an applicant is successful through all of these tests, a thorough background investigation is completed that includes computer voice stress analysis and psychological and medical examinations which takes an additional 10 to 12 weeks. Applicants who successfully complete this rigorous testing and background process are hired and immediately begin the training program.

The county is also renegotiating its contract with California Forensic Medical Group for expanded medical services to inmates. It's expected for the county's costs for medical services will hit $1.8 million at full occupancy.

Duncan said the new facility will centralize and streamline booking of male and female inmates, provide minimum and maximum security housing and access to physical and mental health services "in a unique custom designed clinic and healthcare unit."

The larger jail will allow the county to change the way it handles inmates. Due to budget shortages since 2009, the county has closed 434 inmate beds and resorted to assigning inmates to alternative work programs for sentencing. In 2011, only 19 percent of the county's inmate population was serving a jail sentence. The additional beds will allow the county to handle the greater influx of inmates that resulted when the state shifted more of the burden from overcrowded state prisons.

The county will next embark on the SB 1022 project for the 288-bed Re-entry and Enhanced Alternatives to Custody Training (REACT) Center "with the ultimate goal of providing a continuum of rehabilitative programs for inmates from reception to aftercare in partnership with our friends at the Probation Department and the Day Reporting Center," said Duncan. The goal of the program is to reduce recidivism and encourage former inmates in being more productive citizens.

Under AB 900, the state provides 90 percent of the cost for new jail construction. Over 20 counties have successfully applied for project money and Stanislaus County is the only county that has started construction.